



NEWS RELEASE

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FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

TALLAHASSEE, FL, Oct. 20, 2004 — Florida A&M University today received a USDA Rural Development grant to spur economic growth in the state. Eleven 1890s Land Grant Universities nationwide received nearly \$1.5 million in business and technology development assistance to provide outreach and technical assistance in developing new businesses and employment opportunities in underserved rural communities. 1890 Institutions have some of the best agricultural science and business education programs in the nation, and Rural Development will be building upon the strength of these programs to ensure that quality education related to small business development is also available in these communities. Located in Tallahassee, Florida A&M University is a four-year, public institution of higher learning in the Florida State University System.

Florida A&M University has been awarded \$100,000 to implement business and economic development outreach service to six selected rural counties in North Florida with the most economic need and to establish long-term and sustainable economic and business growth. Liberty, Madison, Jackson, Gadsen, Calhoun and Hamilton counties have been identified as limited resource communities that will benefit from outreach and technical assistance focusing on new and existing cooperatives, and encouraging and assisting underserved rural community residents to participate in Rural Development programs, especially those administered by Rural Business and Cooperative Programs.

Representing USDA Rural Development at today's check presentation ceremony was USDA Rural Development State Director Charles W. Clemons, Sr. "It is critical that our underserved communities and businesses benefit from this effort to match up USDA Rural Development technical and financial resources with the technical business expertise at Florida A&M University. This program will benefit not only the six counties that are being directly assisted, but the state of Florida as a whole given the importance of business development to our economy and citizens," said Clemons.

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. Further information on rural programs is available by contacting any USDA Service Center or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/fl>

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